

Application No.: 09/922,092

Docket No.: JCLA6561-R

**REMARKS**

1. About the amendments, clearly, the present invention is considering all the involved masters together. In other words, the masters are considered as a group for treatment. The amended claims add this condition in more specific words without introducing new matter.

2. Christiansen divides a plurality of devices into two groups. The multiple master devices in first group are assigned to the first priority in equal access. The second group for another master is assigned to the second priority.

3. In the present invention, the master device in the same group, such as the 16a-16d in FIG. 1, are not assigned to the same priority with equal access. The present invention does not divide the devices into two groups with two levels of priority. In other words, the present invention is dealing with the master devices as a group, which are conventionally treated as the same priority level. The mechanism of the present invention is different from Christiansen. *It never occurs in the present invention that there are two or more masters being in the same highest priority with equal access.* However, it indeed is in Christiansen.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 7 patently define over the prior art references, and should be allowed. For at least the same reasons, dependent claims 2-6 and 8 patently define over the prior art references as well.

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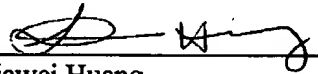
**CONCLUSION**

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is believed that all the pending claims 1-8 of the invention patently define over the prior art and are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

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